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TAGS: PREL KPAL KWBG UNSC IS LY
SUBJECT: LIBYA REQUESTS URGENT UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING
ON GOLDSTONE REPORT

Classified By: Ambassador Susan E. Rice for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) On October 6, Libyan PermRep Shalgham sent a letter to the UN Security Council President (Vietnam) requesting, under Rule 2 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, an urgent meeting of the Security Council "to discuss the Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict led by Justice Richard Goldstone." Rule 2 states: "The President shall call a meeting of the Security Council at the request of any member of the Security Council." (Note: Requests for meetings made under Rule 2 are generally respected. End note.) Vietnam, in its capacity as Council President for October, is seeking to convene closed consultations on October 7, at 11:00 am EST to discuss Libya's request.

¶2. (C) Upon receipt of the letter, Ambassador Wolff spoke to Palestinian charge Feda Abedhady-Nasser who said that she was informed of the Libyan letter 45 minutes before it was circulated. However, her initial instructions were to support the initiative. She also indicated that her government would want a product coming out of Council deliberations to mitigate the criticism Ramallah had received over its handling of the report at the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

¶3. (C) PolOff spoke with Jordanian PolOff Adi Khair who confirmed that there was no/no Arab Group discussion in New York about the Libyan decision to request a Council meeting. The Egyptian mission also confirmed the lack of Arab Group discussion. Khair noted that he had heard that al-Jazeera began carrying the story of the meeting request as soon as the Libyan mission faxed its request to the Vietnamese, implying that they wanted to make the request a "fait accompli."

¶4. (C) Pol Deputy MinCouns spoke with Libyan PolOff Ahmed Gebreel who noted significant media pressure from the region to do something on the Goldstone report and said his mission's goal was a public Council meeting this week to discuss the Goldstone report. He confirmed his mission's request for consultations on October 7 to discuss the format of such a meeting. When asked to justify a separate meeting on the Goldstone Report, given the Council's already scheduled Open Debate on the Middle East on October 20, Gebreel did voice openness to moving the Open Debate to earlier in the month. He did not specify whether or not Libya would seek a Council product on the issue.

¶5. (C) Libyan Perm Rep Shalgham told Ambassador Rice the request for a meeting was a Libyan initiative that was now supported by the Palestinians. He said the request was prompted by frustration in the Arab world with President Abbas' decision to defer the Palestinians' Goldstone resolution from consideration by the Human Rights Council. He said the topic needed to be discussed now by the Security Council.

RICE